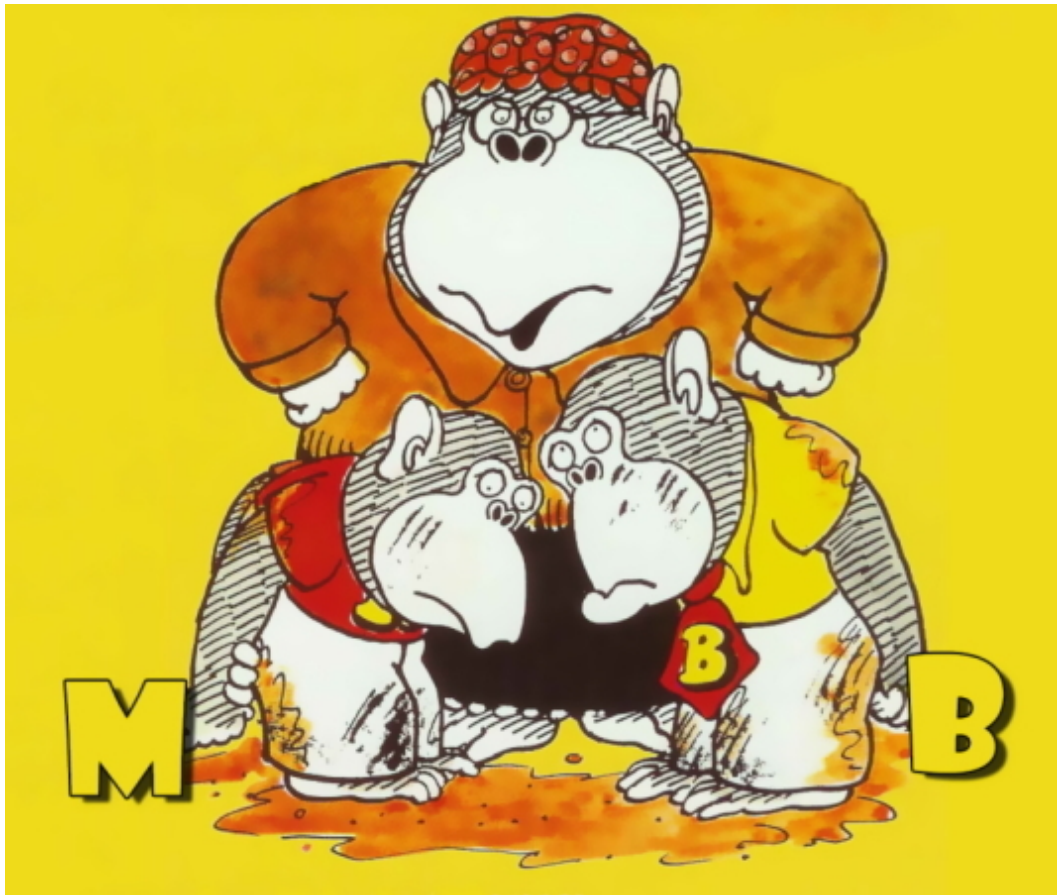


Oooh, chimpanzee that!

Written by dreamkatcha. Any related videos, as always, can be found on my YouTube channel.

None of this would have been possible without the fantastic resources generously provided by immensely talented emulator authors, and communities such as Hall of Light, Lemon Amiga, Lemon 64, World of Spectrum, Moby Games, World of Longplays and Recorded Amiga Games. Thank you for your tireless dedication to preserving the history of gaming.

You know how when you watch some kid's cartoons several decades after you first saw them and begin noticing all kinds of suspect innuendo, double entendres and adult jokes that would have sailed right over your head at the time? Well, there's none of that monkey business to be found in Bangers and Mash. I watched all 25 five minute episodes of the animated cartoon and spotted nothing remotely edgy or sensational. I was banking on that to make this article vaguely interesting. Now, what am I supposed to do? If only those tea-drinking chimps were still around to offer me some (PG) Tips. Curse you PETA!



Dating back to the '70s, Bangers and Mash was originally conceived as a series of children's books written by Paul Groves and Edward McLachlan, starring two brotherly chimps. Can you guess what they're called? The letters on their t-shirts should give you a clue in case you've just awoken from induced-coma brain surgery and the anaesthetic hasn't quite loosened its grip on your blurry faculties.

Anyway, Clive and Bubbles live with their parents and gran at no. 3 Tree Street, Chimpton, inadvertently stumble into all kinds of hilarious mischief, and, er... that just about covers it. Life was more simplex back then. Do people really think that's the opposite of complex? I keep hearing that. Weird.

Then in 1989 Bangers and Mash made its debut on the British TV channel, ITV, as a series of hand-drawn, animated

interstitials. Repeated until 1993, then put out to pasture, never to be heard from again... until YouTube and retro-gaming emerged.

Aimed at young nippers, the story writing is unsurprisingly simple. It *had* to be for the plots to unravel and be resolved within the space of five minutes. Hopefully, kids learnt a few moral lessons, revelling in the tireless enfilade of puns. And for the sake of decency interpreted the line, "Ooh, they're getting a right ducking" literally. Our chimp protagonists were being chased by a posse of ducks at the time I should add. All perfectly innocent.

Primitive as it is, B&M (not the discount store) stands out for a couple of reasons. One man - Jonathan Kydd - provided all the characters' voices as well as narrating the 'action'. He's got a Wikipedia page - his CV is a mile long so I'm not going to attempt to summarise it!



Secondly, the memorable theme tune was composed and performed by the much-loved British musical institution, pop-rockney duo, Chas & Dave. I'd belt out a quick rendition, but I can't remember how it goes.

"They never mean to do no harm, but you can guarantee,
They'll upset the apple cart, though accidentally, Mash
and Bangers' clangers come about quite frequently..."

Chas 'n' Dave sung that quirky little number about rabbits. You're suddenly looking blank-faced. It featured on their Don't Give a Monkey's album, which would be ironic if it had anything to do with Bangers and Mash. It doesn't. Damn it.



A year before being retired from the telly box, Alternative Software purchased the rights to produce a game based on the Bangers and Mash show, commissioning Bizarre Developments to do the grunt work. You may remember them as being responsible for licensed classics such as Fireman Sam, Popeye 2, Wrestle Crazy and Huxley Pig. Thanks Troy.

Bangers & Mash

a

bizarre development
sheffield



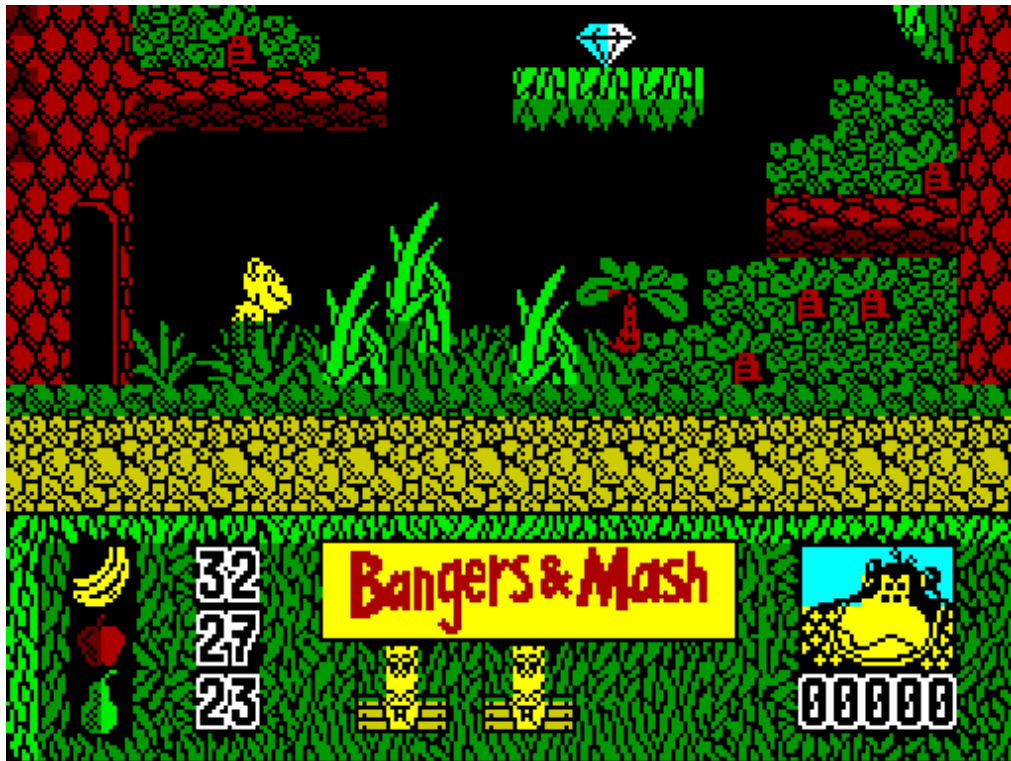
Bangers & Mash



a bizarre
development
sheffield

It's a single-player, vertically flicking platformer released for the ZX Spectrum, Amstrad CPC and Commodore 64. We play as Bangers, while Mash puts his feet up back at the ranch. Tasked with rounding up an orchard-load of fruit to cram into mummy-chimp's pie, we must traverse the levels from bottom to top via all manner of floating balancing beams a la Rainbow Islands or Edd the Duck.

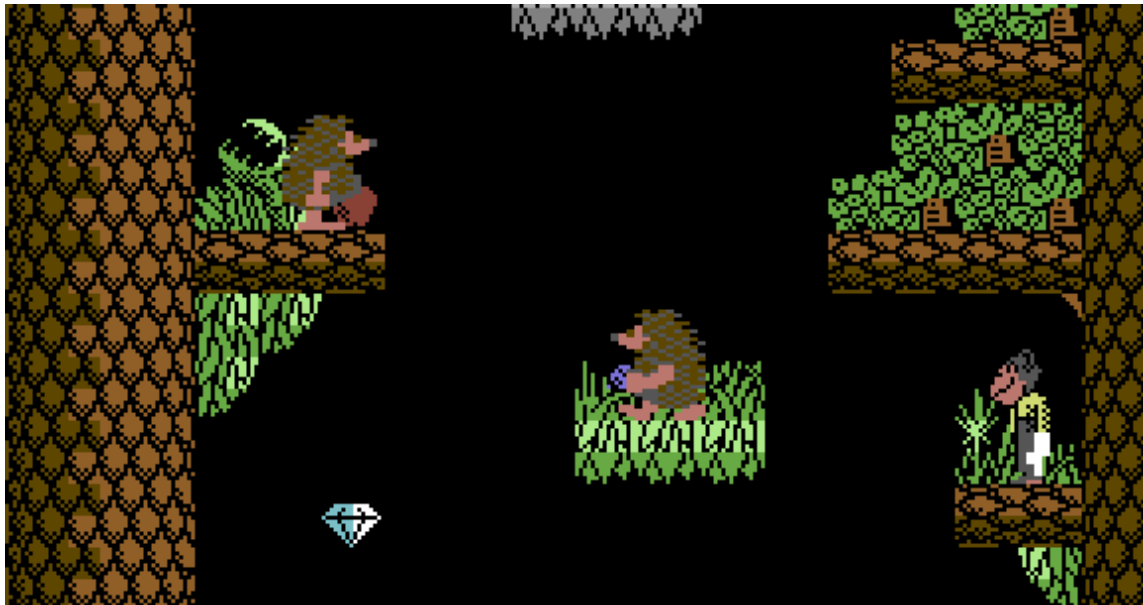




Once we've collected the requisite quantity of fruit, the exit at the apex of each level opens, allowing us to escape to the next, clinging to the string of a helium balloon.

What do you call a flying monkey? A hot air baboon.

I say 'each' level as though there are dozens to explore, yet all we get for our hard-earned £3.99 is two.



In-between we face numerous baddies such as hedgehogs, ladybirds, and Venus flytraps, as well as our ultimate nemesis; the rat-ish local witch, Mrs Snitchnose. If you spot a Mario Bros style pipe with windows in it, keep in mind that it's not a Nintendo homage. This is the witchy one's house as seen in the cartoon.





Mrs Snitchnose isn't alone; in tow is her supernatural minion entourage, a party of skeletons and ghosts. The latter can only be stunned/deterred rather than dispatched entirely. Don't worry, Bangers' weapon of choice is mud pies so we only employ non-lethal force. Phew!

Scavenging diamonds confers bonus points, whilst a variety of colour-coded flowers serve as power-ups. White ones explode like smart bombs, automatically collecting all fruit on the screen on our behalf (that's science at work!). What do you call a monkey in a minefield? A ka-boom! Purple = points appropriately enough, blue blooms reverse our controls (oh what joy!), and almost as painful, red flora result in instant death.



Anyone in the market for a dumbed-down reinterpretation of Rainbow Islands, five years after its inception, will think the banana boat has beached in their back yard. Yes, it's well coded, collision detection is precise, the soundtrack is impressively accurate, and the graphics are evocative of the source material, but what were Alternative doing releasing it in 1992 only for 8-bit platforms? The Amstrad, Speccy and C64 were drawing their pensions by then, most of their disciples having already moved on to fresh new deities such as the Amiga, or perish the thought, the 16-bit consoles. It's enough to make you scratch your armpits with Cretaceous befuddlement.



"Platform, jungle fun for the younger Spec-chum" according to Your Sinclair (70 degrees, June 1992), but is it better than Beyond Belief's 'Biff'? Let the monkey-off commence!